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COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. IV. No. 10.]

London, Saturday, 10th September, 1803.

[Price 10d]

“ These ‘king’s friends’ have no more ground for usurping such a title, than a resident freeholder in Cumberland or Cornwall. They are only known to their Sovereign by kissing his hand, for the offices, pensions, and grants, into which they have deceived his benignity. May no storm ever come, which will put the firmness of their attachment to the proof: and which, in the midst of confusions and terrors and sufferings, may demonstrate the eternal difference between a true and severe friend to the Monarchy, and a slippery sycophant of the Court! Quantum infido scurræ distabit amicus.” —BURKE.

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TO THE EDITOR.

August 19, 1803.

SIR,—In the Morning Chronicle of the 16th inst. there appeared a paragraph respecting the subscriptions to the fund at Lloyd’s, which paragraph I must consider, as a libel on the nobility and gentry of the country; and, I shall, accordingly, trouble you with a few observations upon it.—In the first place, I beg leave to point out the mischievous tendency of the language in which this paragraph is couched.—I should be glad to know whether it is meant to be stated, that our “nobility are little useful “ to the state?” That their existence depends only upon that “opinion which respects their spirit?” Is it meant to be insinuated that “the country can very well “shift without them?” Or is it held out as a threat, that unless the nobility will do what this scribbler wants them to do, the country will get rid of them and will shift without them?—If this is really what he means to state, and to insinuate, I do assert, that this statement is not only most false, but most mischievous into the bargain; not only not to be mentioned, because it is not true; but even if true, not to be mentioned, because it is hurtful.—So much for the language and sentiments of the paragraph.—In the second place, I deny that it, by any means, appears that the nobility and gentry of the country are less ready to come forward in defence of it, than the mercantile part of the community. It is said, that in the list of subscribers at Lloyd’s, there appears the name of scarcely one nobleman, while those of the principal merchants and bankers in the city, are set down opposite very large sums.—Suppose I were to admit this, which is the foundation of all the abuse, which he has uttered in the paragraph; Will it support the fabric which he has raised upon it? What in fact does it prove? Nothing more or less, than this, that rich merchants have subscribed large sums for certain objects, for which noblemen and gentlemen (whether rich or

not) have not subscribed. Hence our writer takes an opportunity to eulogize the said merchants; and with much greater earnestness and zeal to reproach the nobility and gentry. Before he did this, however, he ought to have proved two things; first of all, that the said subscribing merchants deserve praise for so doing; and secondly, that the non-subscribing gentlemen deserve blame for not doing so. He assumes both these positions as matters of course. I am inclined to dispute them both.—1st. I deny that the merchants and other subscribers deserve any great commendation for these subscriptions. I should like to know with what view this subscription was set on foot; the first article of which, was £20,000 three per cents.? Was the motive of it so purely and simply patriotic and disinterested, as to deserve all the applause which some vain people are willing to arrogate to themselves on account of it, and which other foolish people are ready to bestow? Is it quite evident that there was no thought at all of *self* in the promoters and supporters of the plan? No wish to make an ostentatious display of wealth; no desire to gratify vanity on the one hand, and to obtain applause on the other? Was there no intention of thereby propping up the faltering public credit? No plan to keep up the price of stocks?—But it will be said, admitting this to have been the object, it is still a beneficial one; and the promoters of it still deserve our thanks and commendation. I, for one, am not quite so sure, that to support *what is called* public credit, is so useful an object as some persons would fain persuade us.—I am not quite certain, that what we gain by credit, is not more than compensated, by what we consequently lose in courage, in spirit, and in real substantial patriotism. But, of this I am quite sure, that the credit which wants such props and supports as these is not worth supporting. If it is even a buttress, in this case it is a buttress not supporting the fabric, but supported by it;

not enabling it to stand firm and erect; but at best of no use at all, and probably, itself leaning on the edifice supporting it. But passing over that point, I might possibly be inclined to have conceded the intention in consideration of the merit of the execution, to almost any one in the world, but to this captious scribbler.—It is a pleasing symptom of good nature to be inclined to attribute every action to a good motive if possible; but this, my friend, is only inclined to do so on one side, and to do it on that side in order to cast a greater slur and reproach on the other. He commends the merchants in order to revile the nobility. If therefore, I am now about to pull a stone or two out of this prodigious pyramid of glory and honour, which these wealthy dealers in contracts and stocks are raising to themselves, they must attribute it entirely to the indiscreet zeal of this eulogist, and not at all to any malevolence of mine, for I was well enough inclined, till thus provoked, to leave them in quiet possession of the whole, whatever it might be. I will therefore say, that if it be admitted, that the upholding the stocks is meritorious, those persons who disinterestedly make sacrifices for that purpose are deserving the gratitude of the country. But, if it should happen that none of these merchants and bankers are in the case of disinterested persons, if it should appear that the supporting of the credit of the stocks, is necessary to support their own credit, and their own credit absolutely necessary to the preservation of that wealth, which supplies them with all the pleasures and luxuries of life, and enables some of them to eclipse, in show, all the great and noble families in the country; if this should appear to be the case, (and if I am not very much deceived, every one will at once perceive that it is so), then I say, all these public-spirited dealers in the 3 per cents. are entitled to no more praise at all, than that to which every man is entitled, who is willing to sacrifice a little in order to preserve a great deal; who is inclined to bear a little pain in order to rid himself of a serious suffering; in short, to the praise of prudence and foresight. And I am the rather of this opinion, as I do not observe that these gentlemen have ever manifested this wonderful degree of public spirit in any other manner or on any other occasion. I do not blame them for that, nor do I wonder at it. I only mean to contend, that for this they have no right to assume all that praise which they seem to arrogate to themselves.—2dly, I deny that the nobility and gentry who have not set

down their names to this subscription deserve blame. Seeing the objects of the subscription itself to be such as I have before hinted, and seeing too, that these persons are but very little interested in promoting these objects, (very little indeed, when compared with the mercantile gentlemen), it is not much to be wondered at, that they should have held back. And the less will this be matter of wonder, I conceive, when it is considered, that by so doing, they at least forbear to bring into public light and notoriety, the mortifying fact of the inferiority, in point of opulence, of the landed gentry to the merchants. People may talk as much, and as long as they like, of laying aside all considerations of private feelings; it is not in human nature to do so; and when their private feelings are honourable, when they arise from good motives, and tend to a good end, it would be unfortunate if it were. Gentlemen of eminent families may well and properly be grieved, if they were to see published in every ale-house of the land, their inability to equal, in pecuniary sacrifices, those who may be of very inferior origin; and the more so, as on reading such accounts all persons are naturally inclined to measure the will by the deed, and will be very apt to exclaim, "Here are the merchants coming down with their thousands, but the sordid nobility and gentry scarcely subscribe as many units."—Will not this be the general observation? And is it not proved by this very writer, who on no better ground than this, has had the insolence to write the paragraph above quoted?—Having said thus much, in order to prove, that neither the one party is deserving of all the commendation they have received for what they have done, nor the other all the blame, which has been imputed to them, for what they have not done, I should wish to ask, upon what grounds it is that the nobility are accused of degeneracy, of want of spirit and feeling for the country? They have not subscribed at Lloyd's. Have they done nothing else, have they not come forward in the militia, or in corps of yeomanry and volunteers? I really do not know the real answer to these queries; but this I know, that if without one single exception, they were to be answered in the negative, I should still hold them guiltless of the charge. Let us consider what means they have had offered to them of coming forward, and under whom. Under whom! under the auspices of the right hon. H. Addington, son of —— Addington, M. D., raised by the friendship of Mr. Pitt to be

speaker, and chosen to be prime minister of the country, no one knows why or wherefore; and supported in that situation no one knows how; but confessedly, neither by his abilities, nor his merit, nor the wisdom of the measures of his administration. Is it matter of surprise, that men proud of their birth, of their hereditary honours, of their ancient families, should be backward to come forward under these auspices? Or are his colleagues, and his associates, and his friends, likely to mend the matter? There is, my Lord Hawkesbury, in the first place, and then there are brother Bragge, secretary at war, brother Hiley, first paymaster of the army, and friend Tierney treasurer of the navy. (And I have by the way but one just remark, that after certain adventures of some of the last named right hon. gentleman's family in Jamaica, it seems rather extraordinary that the treasurership of the navy should be just the situation pitched upon for him.) I repeat the question: is it matter of wonder, if Peers and men of noble birth, should not choose to come forward under the auspices of such men as these? But in point of fact, I believe, these considerations of family pride, which in my opinion are very wholesome and very seasonable too, were a good deal got rid of, and all the men in the country were willing, and ready, and zealous, to come forward, if but the means and opportunity had been given to them. But even this was denied. The militia was called out, it will be said. It was so, immediately after the message of the 18th of March, when there existed a very great spirit in the country, and yet few gentlemen joined it. Very likely, that is no matter of surprise to me. I should rather wonder if any did. Considering the manner in which the militia was treated last war, and the probability (not to say the avowed intention) of repeating that treatment now, that would be no matter of surprize to me. The militia was called out, and nothing else was done. Many gentlemen made offers of service, and of raising corps. Some few were accepted, others refused; to others no answer at all was given, and all this apparently from whim, caprice, or partiality, for it has more than once happened that offers perfectly similar and cotemporary has met with all these different receptions. In one case an offer was made and accepted: many gentlemen were coming forward in consequence of the popularity of a noble earl who had made that offer, and had proposed themselves to officer the corps which was to be raised; but lo! all at once some unforeseen impediment arose, and all these persons

were sent about their business. Is this conduct likely to promote spirit, or to encourage gentlemen to exert themselves? Now, at last, volunteer corps are to be raised. This measure comes most tardily, if it was meant that gentlemen should take a lead in them, and bring them forward to any good purpose. Is it, however, at all likely, when all the circumstances of their promotion is considered, and when experience has so lately convinced all who have had any thing to do with them, of the trouble they occasioned, and of their total insufficiency? You have already handled this matter so well, that I shall not say another word on that subject, only adding, that I believe every man who has had any thing to do with volunteer corps, and every other man who will but give himself the trouble to think, will perfectly agree with you in every word you have said about them. One measure, indeed, was adopted, which promised to be most useful, which would have given every gentleman of property and spirit an opportunity of exerting himself in the most useful manner, and in his proper sphere. But, alas! that measure was scarcely adopted before it was again laid aside! Ministers, as if frightened at the extent of the plan, which was throughout, in the idea, most excellent (a little faulty, perhaps, in the execution, and that is all) had no sooner began to act upon it, than they immediately exerted every nerve to prevent its efficacy, and to spoil its operations. The General Arming Bill is the measure I allude to. Of a most excellent tendency was it, but now, by their alterations and corrections, assisted by private instructions to Lord Lieutenants and others, it has at length dwindled to the raising a mass of volunteer corps: a mass of incomplete, ill-organized, ill-disciplined men, having none of the qualities of a soldier, not even that of having a musket a-piece, [Vide Lord Hobart's Letter, in which 25 musquets are said to be sufficient for 100 men] and incapable of doing any thing, but create disorder, confusion, and delay. How great, on the contrary, might have been the benefits derived from the prosecution of the original scheme! We should then have seen every gentleman of property and influence exerting himself wherever that property and influence were, in forming not only the bodies of men to the use of arms, but forming their minds too; infusing into them all that spirit, energy, and zeal, which the present contest, well brought forward, is so fit and so capable to bring forward, and without which it is, I fear, little likely to have any, but a most fatal termination. We might then

have had a military spirit rising in every part of the country, and all the best, and strongest, and boldest, and ablest, glowing with voluntary zeal and eagerness to fight her battles. We might have had gentlemen of family and fortune, coming forward, not as colonels and captains of volunteer corps, commanding troops who know not how to obey, and whom they know not how to direct; but using all their influence to infuse that spirit, and to promote that ardour and feeling of patriotism, which (as I observed in a former letter) is of absolute necessity to make a people a military people. Then, indeed, we should have had a fair prospect of safety, however great the power and formidable the force of our enemy. We should have had that in the country, which neither the swords nor the cannon of the enemy would impair or destroy. We should have had a mind diffused throughout the people, incapable of being subdued, which, indeed, can be of little use without the co-operation of fleets and armies; but which would have produced them, and without which fleets, however well appointed, and armies, however numerous, can be of no avail. In lieu of this, ministers prefer volunteer corps—theirs is the choice, theirs be the merit or the blame. — I should now conclude, at least for the present, if I did not think it necessary to observe, that there is a laborious duty, neither rare, nor easy, nor unimportant, which falls altogether upon the noblemen, country gentlemen, and clergy, which they are most assiduous in the discharge of, and for which they never receive any compensation or even any thanks; I mean all the business performed by them as Magistrates and as Deputy Lieutenants. All the labour of these situations is peculiarly theirs, and at this time is particularly urgent and multiplied, and that alone should entitle them, at least, to the privilege of not being reviled for total inactivity at this urgent crisis.—I am, yours, &c.

ANNIBAL.

PUBLIC PAPER.

Notice of the BLOCKADE of the Port of HAVRE de GRACE, by the Ships of HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY.
—Dated Downing Street, Sept. 6, 1803.

The King has been pleased to cause it to be signified by the Right Honourable Lord Hawkesbury, his Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to the Ministers of Neutral Powers residing at this Court, that his Majesty has thought proper, for the defence of his dominions, and the protection of his subjects, to take the most effectual measures for the blockade of the port of Havre de Grace, and that from this

time all the measures authorised by the Law of Nations, and the respective treaties between his Majesty and the different Neutral Powers will be adopted and executed with respect to all vessels which may attempt to violate the said blockade.

DOMESTIC OFFICIAL PAPERS.

The following is a copy of the Address, which was lately proposed to be delivered to his Majesty, on the part of the Irish Catholic Noblemen and Gentlemen.—The Ministers insisted upon certain alterations being made in it, previously to their laying it before the King. These alterations are inserted here, between brackets, which brackets embrace the words proposed to be put in by the Ministers, in lieu of those words of the address which are distinguished by ITALICK CHARACTERS.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,—We the undersigned, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, professing the Roman Catholic Religion, humbly presume to approach your Majesty on the renovation of hostilities with a most dangerous enemy, in full confidence that a sincere tender of our utmost exertions in the common cause of the British Empire, will be graciously received by the common Father of his people.—We give place, Sire, to none of your Majesty's subjects in fidelity and loyalty to our Sovereign. Experience has proved our unvarying attachment to the illustrious House of Brunswick, and we entreat leave to assure your Majesty that our gratitude has, throughout a reign of general mildness and benevolence, constantly kept pace with the favours, indulgences, and concessions granted to your Roman Catholic subjects.—But, may it please your Majesty, *we cannot dissemble how much our zeal is counteracted* [we feel it incumbent upon us to represent to your Majesty, that our zeal is materially counteracted], and, as we humbly conceive, the good of your Majesty's services is impeded, in consequence of the laws and provisions by which persons receiving under your Majesty's grant, any pay, salary, fee, or wages in your Majesty's service (except under certain limitations within the jurisdiction of the late Parliament of Ireland) are rendered liable to forfeitures, disabilities, and incapacities, unless they conform to certain conditions utterly repugnant to the profession of religion made by us in the oath lately prescribed by the legislature as the test of our allegiance to your Majesty.—Without presuming to suggest limits, modes or times to your Majesty's Royal will and pleasure, we humbly conceive the present awful crisis of public affairs, imperiously calls for the assistance of every arm that can be raised in defence of our King and Country, and *we confidently look to the moment as not far distant* [we look to the moment in which] *in which our utmost zeal and exertions for your Majesty's person and government, and for the welfare of our country, may be brought into full action by our admission to an equal participation of all the rights and benefits of the constitution.*—So may your Majesty long enjoy and transmit to your latest posterity, a crown secured in the affections, and supported by the cordial and unchecked energies of an united, happy, and grateful people *.

* The address, thus amended by the Ministers, the Catholic Noblemen refused to present.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1803.

Proclamation, respecting Aliens, dated 31st day of August, 1803.

GEORGE R.—Whereas under the present circumstances much danger may arise to the public tranquillity from Alien enemies resorting to, and residing in Great Britain.—And whereas by an Act passed in the forty-third year of our reign, intituled “An Act to repeal an Act passed in the last session of Parliament for establishing regulations respecting Aliens arriving in this Kingdom, or resident therein; and for establishing, until three months after the ratification of a Definitive Treaty of Peace, regulations respecting Aliens, arriving in this Kingdom, or resident therein, in certain cases,” due provision has been made for inflicting penalties on all such Aliens as shall disobey any Proclamation issued by us, directing that such Aliens shall depart the United Kingdom; now we, being desirous of carrying into execution the intent and meaning of the said Act, and thereby providing for the general safety of the Realm, do, by this our Proclamation, by and with the advice of our Privy Council, order and direct, that all Aliens being subjects of the French Republic, or of any place belonging to, or under the dominion of the government of the French Republic, or of any country or territory at war with us, who shall have arrived in Great Britain since the first day of October, one thousand eight hundred and one, and on or before this day the thirty-first of August (other than such Aliens as are hereinafter excepted), shall depart Great Britain in manner hereinafter mentioned; that is to say,—All such Aliens residing within the City and Liberties of Westminster, or elsewhere within the Bills of Mortality, or within the Parishes of Saint Mary-le-Bone, Paddington, Pancras, or Saint Luke at Chelsea, on or before the fifteenth day of September, one thousand eight hundred and three.—And all such Aliens residing in other parts of Great Britain (except as herein after excepted) shall depart Great Britain on or before the twentieth day of September, one thousand eight hundred and three.—And we do further declare and make known, that every such Alien who shall knowingly and wilfully refuse or neglect to pay due obedience to this our Royal Proclamation, and shall be found in Great Britain contrary to such Proclamation, will be liable to be arrested and committed to the common gaol of the county or place where he or she shall be so arrested, there to remain without bail or main-prize until he or she shall be taken in charge, for the purpose of being sent out of Great Britain; and if any such Alien sent out of Great Britain in pursuance of this our Proclamation shall, without licence for that purpose by one of our Principal Secretaries of State, return into any part of the United Kingdom, such Alien being duly convicted thereof, will be liable to be transported for life according to the provisions of the said Act.—And in order the better to enable such Aliens to comply with this our Proclamation and the said Act, we have caused to be provided ships and vessels at Gravesend, for conveying such Aliens to some port or ports on the Continent of Europe: And all such Aliens as are desirous to avail themselves of this accommodation are directed to repair to Gravesend on or before the fourteenth day of September, one thousand eight hundred and three: And all such Aliens repairing to Gravesend, and having obtained their passports conformably to the said Act, by applying at the Alien

Office in Crown-court, Westminster, shall be permitted to embark, and shall be conveyed on board the said ships to be furnished by us, free of expense, to some port or ports on the Continent of Europe.—And all such Aliens as shall decline availing themselves of this accommodation for carrying them out of Great Britain, free of expense, are hereby required nevertheless to repair to the port of London, and to none other port, and there to embark, having their passports conformably to the said Act, to be obtained on application to the Alien Office, as aforesaid, in order to depart on or before the said fifteenth or twentieth day of September, one thousand eight hundred and three, respectively, as the case may require, under the penalties hereinbefore mentioned.—Provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to repeal any part of our Proclamation of the twelfth of this instant August, requiring the Aliens therein mentioned to reside within the limits therein described, except in cases where any Aliens as aforesaid, shall be bona fide proceeding on their journey to the port of London and of Gravesend, in order to embark and depart thereat from Great Britain.—Provided always, that this our Proclamation shall not extend to any Foreign Ambassador, or other public Minister duly authorised, or the servants actually attending upon such Ambassador or public Minister, or any domestic servant of any of our natural born subjects, or of any subject who has been made denizen, or naturalized, such servant being actually and bona fide employed in the service of their respective masters; nor to any such Alien as shall, by virtue of a licence under the hand and seal of one of our principal Secretaries of State, or such person or persons as shall be appointed for that purpose, be authorised to dwell and reside in some part of Great Britain.—We do hereby charge and command that all Aliens to whom this relates, do pay due obedience to the same, and that all Justices of the Peace, Mayors, and other Magistrates, and all Constables and other Peace Officers, do respectively use their utmost diligence to enforce the same.

Cop. of a Letter from the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Middlesex to the Commanders of the Volunteer Corps.

—London, August 26.

SIR,—As I have found, that many volunteer corps, formed in this County, have proceeded upon the idea, that their numbers were not limited by the King's approval of their proposals, I take the liberty of troubling you with this letter, to request that you will furnish me, with as little delay as possible, with an accurate return of the establishment of the corps under your command, distinguishing the field and staff-officers, if any, and specifying the number of troops or companies, with the established proportion of officers, non-commissioned officers, drummers, and privates in each, together with the number of supernumeraries at present enrolled in, or attached to your corps, in a separate column.—I think it necessary to apprise you, that without the King's approbation previously obtained, the corps must not be extended beyond the number for which the King's permission has been already granted; at the same time I have reason to hope that no objection will be made to the addition of supernumeraries (when applied for) to established corps, provided it is perfectly understood, that they will be entitled to no exemptions, and will put government to no expense of any kind.

I am, &c. SCOTT TICFIELD.

INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.—Advises from Sierra Leone, have been received in London, dated on the 10th day of July, which represent the colony to be perfectly tranquil, and the military works, which have been erected, to be completely adequate to its defence. The failure of the rice-crops had produced some distress, but the colonists, who now consist partly of Maroons, were in daily expectation of supplies from England.—St. Domingo, Martinique, and Guadalupe have experienced some distress in consequence of the severity with which all trade to those islands is annoyed by the British cruisers. The Americans have been invited to bring in their produce, without its being subject to the payment of any duties whatsoever, and several American vessels which have entered the ports of those islands have disposed of their cargoes with immense profit. The negroes of St. Domingo have divided, and the two hostile parties lately had an engagement which was attended with considerable slaughter. Great consternation prevails in Martinique, caused by the fear which the inhabitants entertain of an attack from the English: and as the island is in a defenceless state, it could make but feeble resistance. For some time past there has been a considerable scarcity at Guadalupe; and Ernouf, the Governor, has declared Basseterre, Point-Petre, and the other principal ports, free to the importation of naval and military stores and provisions of every kind: he has also issued a proclamation, filled with the most bitter invectives against Great Britain.—Accounts from Jamaica, by the way of the United States confirm the report of a conspiracy among the negroes in that island. Port Royal was to have been burnt, and the inhabitants massacred: the plot, however was discovered, several boxes of arms were seized, and many of the negroes who were concerned, were apprehended and executed.

DOMESTIC.—A proclamation was issued by the King, on the 31st of August, requiring all foreigners, who may be the subjects of any state at war with his Majesty, and who may have arrived within this country since the 1st of October, 1801, to depart from the kingdom before the 15th of September.*—The trials of those concerned in the rebellion in Ireland, began on the 1st inst. at Dublin: several were condemned, and two of them have been since executed in Thomas Street. The Attorney-

General stated “the characters and numbers of the insurgents to be contemptible in the extreme,” and said that “those in Dublin, joined by those in the country, did not exceed 500 men.” He imputed the insurrection “to the joint efforts of those old traitors who had been suffered to remain, and those who had returned from transportation;” and declared the temper of the country to be, at present, “much better disposed to resist the intrigues of traitors, than at any former period.”—The indecision which marks the conduct of Government towards the volunteers has increased the disobedient spirit of those corps, and caused great dissatisfaction among the people in general. The members of one of those heterogeneous associations in the western part of the metropolis, met some days ago, to deliberate on the plan which had been communicated to them, by their colonel, for reducing their number: and after a very long discussion it was determined that “the plan was such as the corps could not possibly receive.” This determination is to be made known to the Government, and it is understood, that if all these persons be not exempted from the operation of the Army of Reserve and the Militia Bills, they will all lay down their arms.—Early in the morning of the 2d inst. a fire broke out in Astley's Theatre, and in the course of a few hours, that, and several of the adjacent buildings were completely destroyed, and many others greatly damaged. Mr. A.'s loss is stated to be £28,000.—A chain of night signals has been formed with fire-beacons along the coast of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Cambridge.—On the 30th ult. a notice was issued by Lord Hawkesbury, informing Foreign Powers, that the Port of Havre de Grace was blockaded by the ships of his Britannic Majesty.*

MILITARY.—The French are raising 12,000 men in Switzerland, who are to remain in the service of the Republic during the continuance of the present war.—It is said, that 40,000 French troops, destined to attack Portugal, have entered Spain; and that the Spaniards themselves, are engaged in great military preparations.—A large body of French troops which was stationed in the environs of Mantua, lately crossed the Adige, and having passed through Ferrara and Ancona has entered the Neapolitan dominions.—Gen. Mortier has marched with the greatest part of the army which he commanded in Hanover, towards the coast

* See page 361.

* See page 359.

of Holland, in order to join the troops now collecting there for the invasion of England.—The Batavian troops are assembling in North Holland and Zealand, and a considerable force has been sent to the Island of Walcheren.—Accounts from Ceylon on the 9th of February, state that a corps of Militia had been formed there, for the protection of the town and district. Gen. Macdowal's army was at Kattaderria, upon the Candian frontiers, and were in daily expectation of crossing the Kaymelle.

NAVAL.—Letters from Cape François dated the 14th of July, state that the blockade is strictly kept up by the British cruisers, and that a great number of ships have been taken and sent into Jamaica. Several French vessels were, a short time ago, cut out of the harbour of Jérémie, notwithstanding that a very heavy fire was kept up from the batteries on shore. Two French 74's and 4 frigates were preparing to sail for Europe, and men were pressed from all the merchant ships at the Cape, to complete their crews.—The entrance of Port Royal in Martinique, is closely blockaded by one of our small squadrons, and the inhabitants of the island are in perpetual dread of an attack from our troops. —British ships are constantly cruising off Guadalupe, and several prizes have been made, and sent in.—On the 14th of June, Capt. Mowbray, in the Maidstone, captured the French brig L'Arab, of 8 guns and 58 men, returning from Athens to L'Orient.—Advices have been received from the Mediterranean stating that Lord Nelson had been joined by Sir Richard Bickerton's squadron.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

PRINCE OF WALES.—The censures which have been passed upon the ministers, on account of their conduct with respect to their rejection of the offer of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, have been attributed to factious motives; to enmity against the ministers, and not to friendship for the Prince. To inculcate this opinion, and, at the same time, to prevent the effect of the general desire, which the Prince must perceive to prevail, as to the publication of the correspondence, which passed between him and the ministers, seems to have been the object of a very insidious article, which appeared in a daily paper of the 27th ultimo, and which, it is credibly asserted, was published at the express request of Mr. Sheridan. The writer sets out with condemning the rejection of the Prince's offer, especially as the measure appears to have been the effect of narrow policy. He

then praises the conduct of the Prince, says that his being invested with a military command must have produced the best possible consequences, that “the objections urged against it are frivolous, unworthy of a serious answer, and that the only reason which does, or can exist, is a mean and mischievous spirit of jealousy in some low mind.” But, having thus disapproved of the refusal to give his Royal Highness a command, this candid gentleman disapproves still more of “the spirit of faction, which it is attempted to raise in consequence of it.” He thinks that the Prince, having done all that there was any occasion for him to do, having “acquitted himself to the people, having already derived from the offer all the honour of actual service,” he should display magnanimity, as well as ardour, in the cause of his country, and thereby endear himself to it still more by giving an example of submission.”—It is impossible to proceed further without asking,—submission to what, and to whom? Because, if it be a submission to any thing but the paternal authority, or the laws of the realm; if it be a submission to the interested views of a minister, then his Royal Highness would set a most dangerous example to the country. Besides, if he has “already derived from the offer all the honour of actual service,” where is the room for this grand display of his magnanimity? But, how shamefully fallacious is it, to pretend, that the making of an offer, which has been rejected, does, of itself, reflect on his Royal Highness all the honour of actual service! When a person has offered to fight, and has been prevented, by the refusal of his adversary, or by some other insurmountable obstacle, such person is, indeed, justly entitled to all the praise due to the action which he was desirous of performing. Very different is the case of the Prince: he is not prevented from fighting by the refusal of the enemy, but by that of the minister: not by the refusal of him, against whom he wished to fight; but by that of him for whom he wished to fight, and who, to use a somewhat vulgar phrase, seems to have considered his room as preferable to his company. So weak, indeed, is this argument, that the writer himself appears to despair of it; and, as is not uncommonly the case, attempts to prop it up by another, by which it is completely destroyed. So partial and so unwise, he says, have been the military appointments, that, it is difficult to decide whether acceptance or rejection be a proof of talent; and, he assures the Prince of Wales, “that

"the rejection of his services, rather raises than lowers him in the esteem of the public!" This statement, so comforting to the people and so flattering to the ministry, contains, nevertheless, very little to satisfy the Prince: for, if it be a very questionable point, whether it be an honour or a dishonour to serve, in the present state of military arrangements, what becomes of "all the honour of actual service," which the Prince is said to have "already derived from his offer," and with which honour he is conjured to rest satisfied?—But, be his injuries what they may, he is, it seems, to bury them in oblivion, lest the expression of his discontent should operate as an example to the "thousands of volunteers, whose services are at this moment rejected, and who will be rendered refractory, if they see the Prince of Wales raising an opposition to government." Raising an opposition to government! This is precisely the doctrine, which Mr. Sheridan preached at the breaking up of the parliament, but which doctrine he very properly reprobated on the 16th of February, 1801. What opposition is the Prince of Wales raising to the government? Is it raising an opposition to government to be discontented at the ill-treatment he has received? To complain of usage such as no Prince in England ever before endured; of being stigmatized in the eyes of the people, and of the whole world, as a person either incapable, or otherwise unworthy, of military command, after having been twenty years in the military service, and after having attended its duties with great regularity; is it being factious to resent treatment like this? The volunteer corps, indeed! So, his Royal Highness is to overlook the contumelious behaviour of ministers towards himself, because their follies have excited discontents in other quarters! But, after all, in what way is the Prince raising an opposition to government? What has he done or said, to oppose measures of ministers? Most people are disposed to think, that he might, with no impropriety, have employed his influence to oppose the ministry; but, that he has done it, there is not the shadow of a proof. His cause has, indeed, been espoused by others; and, he is told, that if he looks round him, "he will see many, who give him support, on the present question, who are far from being friendly to him on other occasions. He will see, that his cause is taken up, as any other cause would be, simply with a view of attacking the ministry, or weakening and embarrassing

"them," the object of all which, doubtless, is to turn them out of their places. Allowing, for a moment, that the object be what is here described, it will then remain for this moderate gentleman to shew the harm that is likely to arise from the ousting of a ministry, who proceed upon "narrow policy;" who, in rejecting the offer of the heir apparent, have acted under the influence of "a mean and mischievous spirit of jealousy in some low mind;" who have so distributed the commands in the army, as to render it "doubtful, whether rejection or acceptance be a proof of talent;" and, who, at a moment when the existence of the State depends upon deeds of arms, have so degraded the military profession, that for an officer to have his offer of service rejected, "rather raises than lowers him in the esteem of the public." What harm there can be in effecting the political dissolution of a ministry like this, it will be very difficult for any one to point out, unless he believes what the ministers themselves tell the world, that, if the nation will not suffer them to remain in power, there can be no ministry at all.—Where this gentleman has discovered those persons, who have taken up the cause of the Prince, simply with a view of attacking the ministry, he does not tell us; and, it does appear a little uncharitable, that a motive so unworthy of a defender of the Prince should have been sought for by a person, who himself describes the conduct of the ministers towards the Prince as comprising every thing that is unjust, mischievous and base. Speaking with reference to this work, of which it is evident the writer in question did not entirely lose sight, it can be safely asserted, that, in none of its pages, nor in those of any work ever conducted by the same editor, can there be found one expression, which is, either directly or indirectly, "unfriendly" to the Prince of Wales. As to friendship, indeed, it is a sentiment, which it would be presumption in a person in common life to affect to entertain towards one so far exalted above him. The proper sentiment is loyalty. Not that sort of loyalty, which flows so flippantly from the tongue of drunkenness, or that issues, in noisy shouts, from the lungs of the rabble; much less that loyalty which, in praying for the King, has in view the preservation of the funds. No; but that sort of loyalty, which includes attachment, fidelity, and zeal, arising, not from reflection and calculation, but from an ever-operative principle implanted in the heart; a principle quite suf-

ficient to call forth, in the cause of his Royal Highness, persons totally uninfluenced by party feelings. It is, too, a very awkward compliment to the Prince, to suppose, that his cause has been espoused from no other than dishonourable, or, at least, very low and selfish, motives; but, it is by no means unnatural, that this notion should be inculcated by those who have *basely deserted his Royal Highness*, and who, of course, are desirous of destroying the credit due to the fidelity of others.—The Prince is exhorted to remain silent for fear of “the dreadful consequences to which ‘his discontent may lead *in the event of an invasion!*’” This danger of invasion, which the ministers themselves have created, is, to them, a thing of standing and general use; and, if the new doctrine laid down, in their behalf, by Mr. Sheridan, should be admitted, a ministry, in order to be perfectly secure from all opposition, have nothing to do but to place the country on the brink of destruction. What! Because this miserable selfish set of men have committed ten-thousand follies, for either of which they would, at any other period of our history, have been driven from office; because they have lost the continental dominions of the House of Brunswick, and because they have placed this kingdom itself in a state of imminent danger; for this very reason it is, that they are to insult the Prince of Wales with impunity! So preposterous a doctrine never met with an advocate, except in some unprincipled tool of an unprincipled ministry.—That his Royal Highness will obtain no redress is very evident; nor would it be at all surprising, if the ingenious malice and insolence of the ministers were to find some new mode of torturing his feelings, and of rendering him completely disgusted with public concerns. This is their great object. He stands in their light. They have taken their places *for life*; and, they want no Prince of Wales to be seen, or to be heard of by the people. Under the usurped title of “*the King’s friends*,” they are endeavouring to secure to themselves an absolute and endless sway over both King and People. With them all responsibility is at an end; for, every measure, which is successful or popular, they take to themselves, while every foolish, ungracious, or even wicked act, they attribute to his Majesty. However strange a way this may be of showing that *friendship*, to which they make an exclusive claim, it assuredly is the way that they have constantly practised, and particularly in the affair which is the subject of these remarks. They have not, indeed,

explicitly stated (for they state nothing explicitly), in Parliament, that it is the *King’s fault*, that the Prince is not employed; but, this is the report most industriously circulated by them, through all the numerous channels, which they have at their command; and, when the Parliament meets, this will be as well understood, and as steadily acted upon, by the Ministers and their partizans, as if it were declared in a message to both Houses. But, is it possible, that this nation, once so jealous of its liberties; that the British Parliament, so long famous for its watchfulness of ministerial encroachment; is it possible, that they will suffer themselves to be the sport of this juggling system of conducting the affairs of the government? Will they tamely hear every good and gracious act ascribed to the Ministers, and every bad and ungracious act, to the King? Lord Oxford, when accused of certain crimes, pleaded the positive order of the Queen; but, so far was this plea from being admitted, that it was numbered amongst the additional charges against him, as “*a slander on the memory of his Royal Mistress*,” towards whom the Commons, in consequence of this his plea, added, that he was guilty of the foulest ingratitude. And, indeed, this is the only principle, upon which one can, in such questions, possibly proceed; for, as the King can do *no wrong*, if the Minister be allowed to shelter himself under a pretended command of the King, the *Minister can do no wrong*; and, if this were admitted, we should live under a government, which would not be worth defending even against the hordes of Buonaparté. The question then would be, not between the British monarchy and the despotism of France; not between the ancient, the royal, and paternal House of Brunswick, and the Corsican Usurper; but between the Addingtons and the Buonapartés; between the upstarts of Reading and those of Ajaccio; and, when the characters of the two were taken into consideration, there really would be more shame in submitting to the former than to the latter.—Every exertion will be made to undermine the influence of the Prince, to lessen the number of his adherents, and to injure him in the opinions of the people; but, it is to be hoped, that his Royal Highness will never forget what is due to himself, and that he will yield to no compromise that shall not include an acceptance of his offer of service.

OFFENSIVE WAR.—That the war, in which we are now engaged, should not be exclusively defensive, appears to be allowed by every one, who writes, or who speaks,

upon the subject. But, while all agree as to the expedience of offensive operations, there is great difference of opinion as to the scale, the manner, the time, the place, the object, and, strange to tell, men are not quite unanimous as to the abstract nature of those operations; for, the partizans of the ministry either believe themselves, or wish to deceive others into a belief, that the nation is at this moment carrying on a most vigorous and fortunate offensive war. To propagate this notion has been, of late, a leading object with the ministerial writers; and, indeed, the dissertation, which is here more particularly alluded to, bears every mark of official dictation. Viewing it in this light, the sentiments it contains are of importance.

— The writer states, in substance, ‘that the blame which was, in parliament, thrown upon the ministers, on account of the loss of Hanover, was without foundation; because, not being able to rouse the Northern Powers, it would have been madness to attempt the defence of the Electorate by the means of British troops: that small expeditions to the coast of France may possibly be of use; but that considerable expeditions, to any part of the Continent, would, at present, be useless, and would only terminate in new battles of Marengo, and in making a great addition to the fame and influence of the Consul of France: that Holland is the only weak point of the Continent; but, as Buonaparté is well aware of this, he is so strengthening himself on that side, that another attack on it would, in all probability, terminate in another Dutch expedition: that, though we cannot make, or excite, war against France upon the Continent, we must not, for that reason, conclude, that we are unable to wage offensive war against her; for, that, an offensive war may be carried on against her marine, her commerce, and her colonies; and that this is, too, the safest and most effectual species of offensive war: that this sort of war-fare will, if no other is carried on, become of vast importance in the eyes of the world; it will be the object of universal attention; and, as it is a scene where British valour is sure to dazzle, the more powerful France is by land, the more she will be exposed to the derision and contempt of mankind, and the more swiftly the fame of Buonaparté will decline: and, finally, that, if we place our finances, our army, and our navy, on such a footing as to be able to say to France, here we will stand for ever unless you yield, she must submit, she must solicit peace, or else she must lose her com-

merce and her colonies, and even all her commercial and colonial hopes.’ — The absurdity of these sentiments would render them totally unworthy of attention, did not the source whence they come give them a fearful importance. As to Hanover, how it at all found its way into remarks of this sort appears quite unaccountable; and, if the writer was, for some reason or other unknown to all the world but himself, resolved to introduce that Electorate, he might, surely, have confined himself to those censures that were passed on ministers, relative to it, and not have put others into the mouths of their adversaries. No one, either in parliament or out of parliament, ever censured the ministers for not attempting to defend Hanover by the means of British troops; no man in his sound senses ever thought of such a thing. The charge, now that all the circumstances are known, is, their not having saved Hanover by influence with Prussia; and the charge in the House of Commons, was, their not having sent transports in time to fetch away the troops, when it appeared, that they had intended to send them: instead of being charged with not sending out a British army to Hanover, they were charged with having neglected to bring a Hanoverian army to Britain, when it was in their power so to do, when they designed to do it, and when they failed in effecting their design only because they were weak and indecisive. — With respect to the scheme of war, which is here described, it may possibly be the only one that is left us to act upon; but, if it be in itself, so excellent, it must always have been a most desirable thing, that France should have been mistress of Europe, and in proportion, therefore, that she should have been mistress of the several parts. Formerly the notion was different: we thought, that every acquisition of France was an evil; but, now we find it was a great good, as contributing to, and making part of, the grand consummation, when she is to be mistress of the whole, and we are to be in possession of all the mighty means of distressing and disgracing her! But, to give a somewhat more rational turn to the argument, admit, that our warfare against the commerce and colonies of France is, in every instance, crowned with success. Will this success put an end to the war? Will it induce France to yield to terms of peace that will give us security? If the answer be in the affirmative, the next question is, why were such terms not obtained from her at Amiens, when her commerce was destroyed as far as it ever can be, and when she had almost forgotten that she

once had colonies? These our maritime and colonial successes will, we are told, cover her with disgrace, and render her an object of derision in the eyes of other nations. Is it likely that our maritime and colonial successes will be greater during this war than they were during the last? And, is it true, that our successes of last war rendered France an object of derision in the eyes of any of those nations, whose opinions can have any influence with respect to her views? If the conclusion, here evidently aimed at, be attempted to be set aside by a denial of the analogy, on which the argument is founded; if it be, as, indeed, it is, asserted, that the discontinuance of active war will tend to lower the military fame of France, and that the laurels of Buonaparté will wither for want of new victories; if this be asserted, it behoves the asserter to say, why that military fame had not been lowered, why that laurel had not withered, during the two years which had elapsed between the treaty of Luneville and that of Amiens, even though to the European inactivity of that period were added the misfortunes of the Egyptian campaign? Besides, if inactivity be so certain a source of disgrace to France, is it not likely, that it will be somewhat disgraceful to us? And, if it be said, that we shall always, or for a long time, at least, be kept in a state of activity by our war on the commerce and the colonies of France, when are we to experience the promised advantages to be derived from the destruction of that commerce and the capture of those colonies? As long as there are French colonies to capture, and French commerce to destroy, France will enjoy part at least of her colonies and commerce; and, exactly in the same proportion that we diminish her commercial and colonial means, we must diminish the means by which we are to be kept in a state of activity, by which we are to dazzle mankind, to disgrace our enemy, and finally to reduce him to the necessity of suing for peace.—If the ministerial partizan should have the good fortune to extricate himself from this whimsical dilemma, his next task will be to reconcile his notions with those of the Lords Castlereagh and Hawkesbury, and their worthy colleague, Mr. Henry Addington; the latter of whom has put on record his solemn protest against the extension of our colonial possessions, while the two former have declared, that the surrendering to France all her colonies was the best, if not the only, means of recovering our influence on the Continent of Europe: and, as to Lord Castlereagh, he was of op-

nion, that the security of England depended, in a great measure, on the revival and increase of the commerce of France. Yet, we are now told, that our salvation is to be wrought by the capture of French colonies, and the destruction of French commerce! The pursuit of these objects it is, which we are now told to regard as constituting that offensive war, which is to recover our lost reputation, humble the pride of our enemy, and give us a lasting and honourable peace! — War is offensive, or not, according to its final object. Because we were the beginners of this war, we are not, for that reason alone, to conclude, that the world will look upon us as being engaged in an offensive war, and our enemy as being engaged in a defensive war. If our object be to change the relative situation of the two countries, to add to our own dominions, or power, or to diminish the dominions or the power of France, the war is truly an offensive war, whatever be the nature of its naval and military operations; but, if mere security be our object, if we are still content to live upon the terms of the treaty of Amiens, if we have only taken up arms to save ourselves from subjugation, and if we are ready to lay them down, when, on that score, our apprehensions are removed, then, though we should be constantly attacking the enemy by land as well as by sea, we must still be regarded as engaged in a defensive war, and must move under all the great and numerous disadvantages attached to that situation. If such be our humble hopes, France will always be, what she now is, the assailant, even though she never attempt to invade us. Buonaparté does not, indeed, come across the Channel; but, there he stands threatening us; and we are fully occupied in preparing not to attack, but to resist him. *Defence* is the word of the day: all our talk is about defence: to defend ourselves seems to be the utmost stretch of our hopes; to remain free from the Gallic yoke, the pinnacle of our ambition. Can we, then, be said to be engaged in an offensive war? Will the world regard us as being so engaged? And, shall we not be exposed to all that contempt, which, as this writer truly observes, belongs to a state of defensive war? — “If,” says he, “we place our finances, our army, our navy, on such a footing as to be able to say to France, here we will stand for ever, unless you yield, she must submit, she must solicit peace, or she must lose her commerce and her colonies, and even all her commercial and colonial hopes.” The alternative being preferred, the commerce

and colonies, the commercial and colonial hopes, being willingly given up by France, as, indeed, they already have been, the ministerial scheme of compelling her to yield is, at once, rendered abortive. But, what, on the other hand, becomes of us, if we should fail in placing our finances, our navy, and our army in a situation which will enable us to "stand for ever" in a warlike attitude? If the contest be reduced to a mere trial of patience and of pecuniary resources, it is by no means difficult to determine, on which side victory will finally remain. Buonaparté has not, in consequence of the present war, imposed one penny of additional taxes upon the people; he has had recourse to no new and extraordinary means for the purpose of augmenting his army; and, if the defensive plan of ministers be pursued, there is every reason for believing, that he may remain for years in his present attitude, without making any addition whatever to the expenses of the nation. How different are the circumstances, in which we are placed! New taxes, to the amount of twelve millions annually, the Army of Reserve, an Irish Militia, three hundred thousand irregular troops: these are the first demands of the war. That the taxes must be nearly doubled, in the space of two or three years, no one can doubt, unless the system of loans be reverted to; and, will any man seriously say, that he thinks the people will patiently bear those taxes, together with the monstrous load of county and parochial rates imposed by the various laws relating to the defence of the country? Yes; they will bear all this and much more, if their prospect be enlivened with the hope of success; but, never will they bear it, unless a system of real offensive operations be resolved on and adhered to. The ministers, with those selfish short-sighted views, by which all their measures are dictated, have swelled out the militia, are raising an additional army by ballot, and, finally, are calling on the mass of the people for volunteer service. All these expedients owe their birth to the desire which ministers have to spare the Exchequer; but, in the eyes of any man of reflection, where is the difference to the country, whether the money, to defray military expenses, be raised by a general tax, or by county or parochial assessments? And, where is the difference, whether it be issued from the King's Exchequer, or from the several county treasuries or parochial vestries? The burthen to the nation is alike in both cases; but, in the latter, its weight falls more partially, and produces effects

more injurious to individuals. In estimating, therefore, the ability and patience of the country to support a long, inglorious, defensive war, we must always take into consideration the effect not of the taxes alone, but also of the enormous, and, in some cases, absolutely unbearable burdens, which come in another shape, and which, while they must inevitably tend to weary the people, produce a great defalcation in the taxes; and, thereby, create the necessity of new ones. For a few months, or, perhaps, for a year or two, this mode of helping out the resources of war may succeed to a certain degree; but, the time must soon arrive, when it will be defeated by the feelings of the people. Hitherto men have thought of nothing but the danger which immediately threatens them; but, very shallow indeed must be that minister, who expects to find, at the end of eighteen months of defensive war, the same degree of zeal that exists at this moment, more especially as the new taxes, none of which have yet begun to operate, will then have made people feel the effects of the war, and will have set them to inquire, what is its object and when it is to end; and, if no one can point out an adequate object, if no one can foretel the probable duration of the contest, is it likely, that the sacrifices, necessary to its continuation, will any longer be cheerfully made? Nay, in such a state of things, after having contemplated the horrors of invasion till these horrors are become familiar, is it not to be feared, that men may make up their minds to submission, rather than bear expenses and anxiety which appear to be endless, because no visible means is made use of to put an end to, or diminish them? One of the grounds, on which the ministers justified the peace of Amiens was, that, all Continental aid being at an end, the war had no longer any object, because without such aid it was impossible for us to make any impression upon France. "The duty of negotiation commenced," said Mr. Addington, "when all hopes of Continental aid was at an end." *—"To those," said he, "who wished to continue the war for the purpose of reducing the power of France, I only wish to state, that another campaign could not have been made at a less expense than forty millions, and that even certain success would not have been worth such a price." Upon ground like this was the peace justified by all the ministers; but particularly by Mr. Addington

* See Parl. Deb. Register, Vol. II. p. 1142.

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and the Lord Chancellor; † and it was, over and over again, asserted, that the people were tired of the war, because it had no longer any object, because there was no longer any hope of effecting a diminution of the power of France. If, therefore, such were the reasons for making the peace of Amiens, why should not the same reasons operate again; and why should not the people ask for an object in this war as well as in the last, unless the present war should prove less burthensome and less vexatious? At present there is an object, the all-important object of saving ourselves from slavery; but, it is utterly incredible, that this object should, for any considerable length of time, continue to stimulate the people: it must soon grow faint in their sight, or it must entirely subdue their spirit: acting upon a defensive system, no nation ever long preserved either its power or its independence.—What, then, ought to be the object of the war? The ultimate object ought to be, to produce such a change in the relative state of Great Britain and France, as shall render a peace between them not absolutely incompatible with the security of the former; and, as this object is not to be attained by a commercial and colonial war, as there are, at present, no hopes of aid from the Continental powers, as very little is to be done by mere assaults of the French coast, and as France would certainly beat us in a trial of patience and of pecuniary resources, the only rational object left for us to pursue, is, the *restoration of the House of Bourbon*. Here success would be of real and lasting use; the enterprize would be great; it would inspire enthusiasm; it would make men cheerfully bear the fatigues and the expenses of war, and, if it did not succeed quite to our wishes, it would produce great alarm in the breast of our enemy, and would, as the least possible good, effectually relieve us from the dread of invasion, and from all the tantalizing measures arising from that dread. Great was the clamour, which was raised against the Royalist part of the last war. Every guinea, expended on that account, was counted fifty times over, while millions upon millions were sunk in the commercial and colonial, that is, in the base, the selfish, and ineffectual, part of the war, without exciting the least murmur. Every thing bestowed on the Royalist war was looked upon as thrown away. It was impossible to make people perceive, that the Royalist

war formed a diversion in favour of Great Britain, and that one guinea expended in La Vendée saved the expending of a hundred for the defence of this island. But, it should never be forgotten; now more especially it should be remembered, that the dread of invasion began the moment the Vendean war was put an end to. Till then, the invasion of either England or Ireland never was thought of by us, and never was talked of by the enemy; but, the moment that war was over, the moment our allies in La Vendée were subdued, and, in a great measure, by the force which our folly (to give it the mildest term), at Valenciennes had sent against them; that moment the spectre of invasion arose, that horrid spectre, which has haunted us ever since, and which will continue to haunt us, till the rebel government of France, or till the British monarchy is destroyed; and, to destroy the rebel government there is no way but that of restoring the Bourbons to their throne.—How this restoration might be effected has been clearly pointed out by a gentleman, who, under the name of Inquisitor, some time ago communicated his thoughts to the public through the pages of this work. He cautions the public, and the caution is too good and too necessary not to merit repeating; he cautions them against adopting the erroneous notion, that, in consequence of Buonaparté's failing in his attempts at invasion, he will become unpopular in France, and will, finally, be overthrown. "As if he were less popular on account of the entire failure, and of his desertion from, the expedition to Egypt; as if he were less popular on account of the complete failure (as we are told it is) of the mighty expedition to St. Domingo, or less able to send thither more troops, because fifty thousand have already perished there!" These are, indeed, striking instances of the docility of the French people, who have, moreover, by no means verified those predictions of the London newswriters, which related to the discontents that the war would excite in France. It has excited no discontent; Buonaparté is as popular as he ever was; nor will any thing short of a war, avowedly for the restoration of the Bourbons, ever shake his power.—That large British armies ought to be employed for the accomplishment of this restoration is what no one can be prepared to say; nor, indeed, is it certain, that good policy would dictate the employing, in this enterprize, any British army at all. But, the soundness of the argument, which the

[†] See Debates, Register, Vol. II. p. 149 and 156.

partizans of ministers make use of against that sort of offensive war, must by no means be admitted. We are, according to these persons, not to invade France, "lest we should give Buonaparté opportunities of gaining other battles of Marengo."—To refuse to fight your enemy is, it must be confessed, a most effectual way of preventing him from beating you in the field; but, it should be remembered, that your refusal amounts to a solemn acknowledgment of his military superiority, while, to you, no defeat could possibly be more disgraceful. The same argument would apply to an invasion of Holland, and, indeed, to every plan, the execution of which included the probability of a battle where Buonaparté would command the armies of France. Farewell, then, if the ministerial notion be adopted; farewell even to the hope of ever producing a change in the relative situation of France and England; and farewell for ever to real peace, to tranquillity, and security; for, these never can be obtained without a change in this situation, and that change never can be effected without giving to Buonaparté a chance of adding to the laurels, which he acquired at Lodi and Marengo. Adopt this notion, and Continental co-operation becomes not only useless but injurious; for, what aid can we possibly receive from the powers of the Continent, other than that of armies employed against France? And, how can armies be employed against France, without furnishing Buonaparté with an opportunity of displaying his military talents, and of supporting, if not adding to, the fame he has acquired?—It is, indeed, but too evident, from the tendency of the arguments advanced by the partizans of ministry, that a poor tame, drawling system of warfare has been resolved on. The ministers would willingly see the Bourbons restored; they are of opinion that no real peace will ever be obtained till that restoration takes place; they would expend, in secret, a few millions for the purpose; but, openly to declare their wishes and their opinions, manfully to commit themselves and to pledge their country in this great and glorious cause; this is what they have not the courage to do; and, without this, the present contest must, at no very distant period, end in a peace, still more ruinous and disgraceful than the last, or in the complete subjugation of this country.—"The people!" The people would object to the expending of the treasures of Britain for any other than "British objects." This was the opinion during the last war; this false and fatal opinion still

prevails. One would think, that experience ought to have worn it away; but, such is our perverseness on this subject, that if the two hundred thousand men, who perished in the last commercial and colonial war, were to rise from the dead in order to reclaim us, we should turn a deaf ear to their admonitions. Mr. Dundas was pursuing British objects, "objects truly British," for that is the phrase; these objects he was pursuing at St. Domingo and Guadalupe. Mr. Addington, too, was pursuing "objects truly British" when he obtained Ceylon and Trinidad, at the expense of Portugal, Sardinia, and the Vendean Royalists. But, did the pursuit of those objects last war prevent Ireland from being invaded, and England from being threatened with invasion? And, have the British objects of Mr. Addington preserved us from those evils now? Have they spared us the shame of preparing to fortify London; and will they spare us the enormous expense of Barracks along the coast for lodging our troops during winter? Have any, or all, of these "truly British" "objects" preserved the character which we formerly maintained in the world; and will the further pursuit of them tend to relieve us from our present most embarrassing, dangerous, and tormenting situation? To restore the Bourbons is an object truly British; because, without that restoration, Britain never can enjoy one hour's secure and honourable peace. We are, to use the words of Mr. Addington, "now at war because we cannot be at peace." This will be followed, as before, by a peace, "because the war is without an object." To that will succeed another war "because we cannot be at peace;" and with that war will end the patience, the pecuniary means, the honour, the liberty, the independence, and the very name of Britain. People may affect to despise these predictions; they may, in the excess of their fear, assume the blustering tone of Mr. Sheridan; but, neither their affected contempt nor their affected anger will turn from its course the current of events, which, unless a vigorous system of warfare, avowedly in behalf of the Bourbons, be immediately resolved on, will most assuredly bring upon this country a fate far more hard and more disgraceful than that of Spain, Holland, or Switzerland.

RUSSIA has finally given in her ultimate propositions, which have been rejected by the ministers. She was good enough to offer to take Malta into her keeping for ten years. The detail is not known, but this was the leading proposition; and, as far as men are to be commended for not

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having committed high treason, the ministers deserve commendation for their resistance.—This, then, is the result of the far-famed mediation of Russia, which was adopted by the ministers amidst the mutual congratulations of the House of Commons, and amidst almost the huzzas of the people. At the time when this mediation was first proposed, it was strongly protested against in the Register: “ We are told “ that the Emperor Alexander is fitting out “ a fleet, and are given to understand, that “ it is to act in our favour. But, how foolish, how ridiculously foolish will this nation look, in a few month’s time, if it expects any thing from this mediation, “ except the further humiliation of England. Russia must be excellently disposed to mediate a peace advantageous for us, after the trick which the ministers have played, in order to prevent her from setting foot in Malta, a post, which, above all others in the world, she was desirous to occupy, and which the Consul artfully proposed to give her possession of. This must most sweetly dispose her for acts of amity towards us! Yet, there are not wanting politicians to entertain very sanguine hopes from this mediation, notwithstanding it is evidently the policy, as it is, indeed, the interest of Russia (if gratifying her ambition be interest) to side with France against England, and to lower the maritime power and pride of the latter by every possible means, particularly while she holds Malta, the very place, to obtain which in perpetuity, we are asking, begging, beseeching, this monstrous mediation! Mr. Fox must have made the motion, to which we have alluded, without any hope of its being adopted. What, then, must have been his surprise, to see his notions, as well as his mischievous motion, adopted by Mr. Pitt? We were surprized to see Mr. Windham and Mr. Grenville silent on this occasion. Approve of the motion they could not, we are certain; and, though it was not put to the vote, though that was prevented by the minister’s promising to adopt the measure which it recommended, still, we think, that Mr. Windham should have taken an opportunity of giving to the whole proceeding some strong mark of his disapprobation.”* — This was one of the passages, which was attributed to a desire to create dependency. Events have already proved,

that the warning contained in it was very salutary. This asking for the mediation of Russia was a most unwise, and will, in the end, prove a most fatal measure. Had we wished to cut off for ever all hopes of obtaining the co-operation of Russia, and immovably to fix that power in the arms of France, we could not have fallen upon a scheme so effectual, as that of asking for a mediation from her, in a dispute relative to Malta. The ministers must have been fully acquainted with the all-powerful motives, which she had for obtaining possession of that island, or, at any rate, for wresting it from the hands of Great Britain; and, for them, under such circumstances, to appeal to her as an umpire, was an act of imbecility unparalleled in the history even of their blundering administration. It is, however, no more than justice to them to state, that they themselves were averse from the measure, and that they complained most bitterly of the conduct of the House in forcing upon them, as it were by acclamation, the proposition of Mr. Fox. Resist they could not, without hazarding their majority and their places; and, thus, in another and most important concern, have the interest and honour of the country been sacrificed to their vanity and emolument. Having rejected the terms proposed by a mediator chosen by ourselves, our cause will become, all over the world, more unpopular than ever: it is utterly incredible, that any of the powers of Europe should think of espousing it: we must fight the battle single-handed, and we may think ourselves extremely fortunate, if Mr. Addington’s three hundred and eighty-one days of peace does not finally procure us two or three enemies, in addition to those whom we before had to encounter.

VOLUNTEER CORPS.—These “ seminaries of indiscipline,” as they were styled in a former sheet of this work, are giving very striking proofs of the progress, which their pupils have made in their studies. Accounts are given of a corps at the west end of the town, who held a debate of four hours on the question, whether they should or should not lay down their arms, unless the government would submit to their terms! A set of resolutions were finally adopted, including a censure on the colonel, who presided on the occasion! The result is not yet known; but, it is easy to foresee, that, if the government gives way, in this instance, all will become disobedience and mutiny.—Indeed, it is impossible for any reflecting man not to entertain very serious apprehensions as to the effects, which may

* Register, Vol. III. p. 828.

result from the deliberations of these armed bodies. Each has its standing committee, and, upon extraordinary occasions, the whole corps is assembled for the purpose of debating. Let any man calculate, if he can, the danger which may arise from there being in the country six or seven hundred armed Parliaments. From the discussion of one subject, they will proceed to the discussion of another; till, in the end, the Parliament at Westminster will not dare to act without the consent of the Volunteer Parliaments scattered all over the country. A fearful state of things is approaching, unless the Government instantly resolves to disband every corps, which is under the rule of a committee, and the members of which shall ever, on any occasion, assemble for the purpose of debating, on any subject whatever.—The army, indeed, is faithful and obedient, and the contempt, which regular troops must necessarily entertain for these undisciplined, unruly levies, will, too, be a further guard against the evil consequences of example. But, really, it is a species of madness to suffer the existence of corps, who are to-day seen in the Park at exercise, and to-morrow threatening to lay down their arms.—One thing, however, should be attended to instantly, and that is, the mode of admitting men into volunteer corps. The admission into these corps exempts the persons admitted, from the ballot for the Militia, and also from that for the Army of Reserve. It is, therefore, of great importance to prescribe the rules by which this admission is to take place. At present a committee of any volunteer corps can grant such admission, and have therein the absolute power of exempting whomsoever they please, (as far as they have vacancies) from the operation of the Militia and Army of Reserve laws; and, also, in case of invasion, from being liable to march against the enemy, an exemption claimed by several of the volunteer-corps. Now, it never can have been the intention of Parliament to lodge such a power as this in the hands of a committee, and that too, a committee self-created. This committee will always be composed of people of some property; in most cases of men somewhat conceited also, and almost always of a meddling disposition. With such persons, there are a hundred motives for giving the preference; first, to their own relations and friends, and next to those of the same rank in life with themselves. Hence, not only

will there be great and shameful partiality; but, the heavy burthen of the Militia and Army of Reserve will be shifted from those who are able to bear it to those who are not able to bear it. In the case of that corps, for instance, whose refractory conduct has led to these remarks, it is a standing rule with the committee not to admit *journeymen*. The corps consists, or wishes to consist of a thousand persons; and, what right have any thousand shop-keepers and clerks to meet together and say, that they will exempt themselves from the Militia and Army of Reserve, and throw their share of those burdens upon the journeymen in the parish, in addition to what those journeymen already have to bear? This is so manifestly unreasonable and unjust, that it must be disapproved of by every one who is not the advocate of oppression.—In taking leave of this subject, the Circular Letter of the Speaker of the Hours of Common, to the Lords Lieutenant of counties, seems to call for a remark. In this letter, which accompanied the vote of thanks to the volunteers, the Speaker notifies the "confidence, " with which the House is impressed, that the "same spirit and exemplary zeal will be exerted throughout the present contest, " until, with the blessings of Providence, "it shall be brought to a GLORIOUS issue." What animating language! No repetition of the Treaty of Amiens? No mediation of Russia? No ignoble compromise? The object of the war is now ascertained by Parliament: it is glory we are to look for; for glory alone are we to contend. Pleased as every one must be at this great sentiment, most persons appear to wish, that it had been conveyed to the public in the form as originally voted by the House of Commons. We all know, that the Speaker is merely the organ of the House; and, it is to be presumed, that he would not, especially upon a subject so momentous as that of the object of the war, have ventured to pass upon the public, as the sense of the House of Commons, his own private opinion. It is, therefore, to be desired that the public may be treated with a sight of the real vote of the House on this point; for nothing could more strongly tend to animate the nation, and to excite the confidence of foreign powers.

The IVth Letter to Mr. SHERIDAN was, as the reader will perceive, excluded by more important matter. It will appear next week.